

36 French Films From Emp-U

Geo. McComber Passes At 47

George F. McComber of Port Arthur, Ontario, manager of the Lyceum Theatre, which he held in partnership with Famous Players, passed away in that city on January 23rd, following a heart attack. He was 47. He was prominent in the civic life

(Continued on Page 6)

Rogell Will Shoot In Alberta

Hollywood Eagle-Lion will make two color films in the Calgary district this year, with a total expenditure of \$2,500,000, stated Al Rogell, Independent producer-director, during a recent visit to that city. Rogell stopped in Montreal and Toronto

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16 In First Group; Indicates Growth In Value Of Field

There will be 16 features in the first block of French films to be released by Empire-Universal Films, part of a total of 36 to be offered this season, it was announced by A. W. Perry, president and general manager of that company. Major market for the films will be Quebec, where they will be distributed from the Montreal branch.

Projector Embargo Back Feb. 7th

Import barrier on 35 mm. projection machines from USA, which was lifted recently after being imposed on January 1st, will be back again on February 7th. On that date importation is to be transferred to the controlled-quota list for capital goods, thus providing for permit licenses.

The ban on importation of 16 mm. projectors remains.

Temporary lifting of the ban enabled the equipment companies to bring in projectors, helping a number of theatres to be completed.

J. Earl Lawson Heads Picture Pioneers

New president of the Canadian Picture Pioneers and successor to O. R. Hanson is the Honorable J. Earl Lawson, president of Odeon Theatres of Canada, who was elected at the national meeting in the King Edward Hotel, Toronto, on January 22nd. Ben Cronk is vice-president, Charles Mavety secretary and George Beeston treasurer.

Additional members of the board of directors are Morris Stein, Joe Garbarino, Bill Reeves, Morris Doyle, Clare Appel, Sam Sternberg, Len Bishop and Oscar Hansen.

Refusal of Ray Lewis, secretary
(Continued on Page 3)

Nathanson In H'wood

Henry Nathanson, president of MGM Pictures of Canada Limited, accompanied by Mrs. Nathanson, is in Hollywood.

Army Builds Houses

The Canadian Army will build a theatre in each of the two new military townships it is constructing at Shilo, Manitoba, and Borden, Ontario.

May Rebuild Theatre At Gatineau Pointe

Wilfred Berlinguette, owner of the Paris Theatre in Gatineau Pointe, Quebec, recently destroyed by a fire from a furnace explosion, may rebuild the theatre as a fireproof cement building if financial arrangements can be completed.

Cities, Provinces Eye Federal Tax

Possibility of Provincial and municipal governments stepping into the amusement tax field when—and if—the federal government vacates it is concerning Canadian exhibitors, who have been advocating that it be dropped so that lower theatre prices

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Switch At Wadena

The 200-seat Roxy Theatre in Wadena, Saskatchewan, has been purchased by the Roxy Theatre Limited from I. Reinhorn. A. Malowanchuk has been named as manager.

Make the Tax Equitable

It is considered almost a certainty that some cities or provinces may impose a tax on movie admissions or raise their present ones if and when the government drops the 20 per cent federal impost. In which case the benefit to the public and those theatres which require lower admission prices to keep operating profitably will be lost. From an exhibitor's standpoint, little will have been gained from the campaign to make Ottawa realize that the tax is hard on both patron and theatre.

Municipal and civic legislators should realize that any tax on any one business is unjust—and especially if that business draws its main support from low wage earners, who would be discriminated against if they bore the brunt of that tax.

The fairest approach to the possibility of such a tax, when legislators think about it, is to consider its application on many articles sold over counters which are purchased by every segment of the population. This would make unnecessary any but a very small tax on theatres and discrimination against those to whom the motion picture is the cheapest and often the only means of entertainment.

Canada's theatre prices are the lowest in the world. Theatre operators have pledged themselves not to raise prices if the tax comes off, so that the public will get the benefit. Does that promise still hold if the prices, for reasons beyond their control, stay up?

LOVE FROM A STRANGER CASH IN on this BIG one from EAGLE-LION (Hollywood)
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thriller by AGATHA CHRISTIE, directed by RICHARD WHORF (MGM)
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WATCH FOR

Cities, Provinces Eye Federal Tax

(Continued from Page 1)

can come into effect. The Motion Picture Theatres Association of Ontario has appointed a committee to study this possibility. Morris Stein, Famous Players, is chairman, and he is supported by Nat Taylor, 20th Century Theatres and Clare Appel, Odeon Theatres.

Mayor Saunders of Toronto, following a meeting with the Honorable D. C. Abbott, Minister of Finance, announced to the press that the tax would come off at some time in the future. He is seeking to have it picked up by the Provincial government, with the money earmarked for municipal hospitals and relief.

The committee which talked with Mr. Abbott for the National Committee of Motion Picture Associations of Canada got no assurance that the tax would be dropped. It is almost a certainty that Ontario and Quebec will reimpose it but on a smaller scale when abandoned by Ottawa.

The exhibitor delegation informed Mr. Abbott that about 40 theatres had closed in the prairie provinces, that business for Independents and small circuit operators in the Maritimes and Ontario was down about 15 per cent, and that the prices were considered responsible. They pledged themselves to leave the lower price that would be caused by the end of the tax alone, so that the public would benefit.

Mr. Abbott questioned the representatives closely, asking if perhaps the drop in business was caused by other factors but it was pointed out to him that the opinion of exhibitors in this matter came through their personal contact with the public.

Both the Toronto Daily Star and the Toronto Globe and Mail which usually oppose each other, favor reimposing the tax for municipal benefit. The Globe and Mail said so in a long editorial called "Rightly a Municipal Tax" and the Star quoted a letter from Mr. Abbott to Premier Macdonald of Nova Scotia.

"The Dominion recognizes the desire of the provinces to have taxation fields of their own," wrote Mr. Abbott on April 21 last year. "We are prepared, therefore, to say that in view of the nature of the amusement and pari-mutuel fields, and the special interest of the provinces in respect thereto, it will be our policy to vacate these fields as soon as circumstances will permit."

Karlson To Direct

Phil Karlson will direct Columbia's "Wild Fury."

36 French Pictures From Emp-Univ'l

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Quebec. Several are already dated in theatres in large Canadian cities, among them Vancouver and Toronto.

Of Quebec's 300-or-so situations, 15 use French-language films exclusively, with many of the others dividing their programs between French and English. It is estimated that about 50 per cent of Quebec screen time is taken up with French-language films, either made in France or dubbed in Hollywood. The importance of this market was recognized by distributors several years ago, and a number of companies made special releases in Quebec and other places with French-Canadian populations. Last year Empire-Universal released 16 films and their reception merited an increase this year to 36.

Of Canada's \$59,888,972 in theatre receipts in 1946, Quebec provided \$12,738,391 and was next to Ontario for the largest gross. These figures do not include receipts of 16 mm. itinerants or amusement taxes.

Two of the Empire-Universal releases are based on famous operas, La Tosca and Cavallera Rusticana. The others are Capitaine Tempete, Le Roi S'Amuse, La Part De L'Ombre, Impasse, La Bell Et La Bete, Les Maudits, La Revanche De Baccarat, His-

toire De Chanter, La Dame De L'Ouest, Etrange Destin, Le Pont De Verre, Sylvie Et Le Fantome, Les Atouts De Mr. Wens and Rocambole.

The films represent the work of the leading French producers and players and among them is La Belle Et La Bete, known in the USA as Beauty and the Beast. Directed by the famed Jean Cocteau as a fairy tale for grownups, it has won a great reception across the line from critics and public, as well as an extraordinary amount of publicity. Josette Day, who plays Beauty was the femme star in "The Well-Digger's Daughter." It opens at the Orpheum, Montreal, on February 6th.

Para Distributes 'Hungry Minds'

At the request of the Dominion government, Canadian exhibitors' associations have agreed to exhibit the trailer, "Hungry Minds," to help the Canadian Appeal For Children drive. This is sponsored jointly by the Canadian Council for Reconstruction through Unesco and the United Nations Appeal for Children. The Canadian campaign ends February 21st.

The trailer will be distributed through Paramount branches in Canada in single reel boxes supplied by the National Film Board, which produced the trailer. A total of 75 prints will be used.

The Canadian quota is \$5,000,000 and the world quota \$100,000,000. Canada had the honor of opening the world drive through the recent visit of Mary Pickford to Ottawa, where her film, "Sleep, My Love," was world-premiered at 20th Century's Elgin Theatre. Receipts went to the fund as the first contribution.

The fund will be spent for food, medical care and schooling of children in the war-torn countries.

To Direct 'Superman'

Spencer Bennet will direct Columbia's serial, "Superman."

Lawson Prexy Of Picture Pioneers

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tary since the inception of the Canadian organization in 1940 and one of its hardest workers, to accept nomination for that office again, was a surprise. She is a life trustee of the benevolent fund.

Business sessions began at one o'clock and continued all afternoon. In the evening a buffet dinner was served in the Crystal Ballroom, where a stage had been set for entertainment arranged by a committee of which Len Bishop was chairman.

During the evening John J. Fitzgibbons, who heads the Pioneers' public relations, spoke on the ideals of the body.

Members initiated at the meeting were Arthur Silverstone, Harry Bailey, Curly Posen, Norman Tanner, Tom Callender, I. Shulman, Dick Geering, Cake Johnson, John Heggie, Leo Haag, H. Q. Burns, Fred Saunders, Norman Jackson, Frank Gilbert and Ferguson Martin.

Canadian Picture Pioneers now has a membership of 435 in Canada, with branches in Saint John, Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary and Vancouver.

In Vancouver on February 3rd the Pioneers held their first movie ball and Frolic at the Hotel Vancouver, with the benevolent fund getting the proceeds. Among the membership are such Canadian industry veterans as W. P. Dewees, W. J. Jones, H. Quagliotti, R. A. Scott and J. A. Schuberg.

Joan Bennett Cast

Joan Bennett has been signed to star opposite Paul Henreid in Eagle-Lion (Hollywood) Films' "Hollow Triumph."

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Seen and Overheard



Lines and Outlines

Title: Pioneer Justice

What with all the noise about Canadian film production, the Pioneers, for the entertainment of those at the annual meeting, put on an old-time Western of the type that built Republic from a Brownie to a small city. Harry Sherman can go hide. The set, a courtroom with a convenient gallows and a waiting noose, was clogged with enough costumed characters to support a Canuck branch of Central Casting. As they went through their hilarious version of Pioneer law Doug Skene of ASN caught it all with his camera.

Although it was staged in a modern big-city hotel, where sometimes the dear and the interloper play while the missus is home at the range, there was no painted set. Everything was built out of fresh lumber — judge's bench, gibbet, jury box and prisoner's box—and looked strictly from the not-so-Golden West.

Earl Lawson, as the judge, out-Beamed Walter Brennan's Roy in "The Westerner" and Sheriff Charlie Mavity, with his usual tenderness, swore in and at the jury, comprised of Jake Smith, Clare Appel, Pete Brown, Morris Doyle and Bill O'Neil, with the aid of deputies Charlie Doerr, Ben Cronk, Harold Pfaff and Bill Reeves.

After trying Harry Bailey and Ferg Martin, who got off lightly, they brought on their prize prisoner, the nigh-on-300-pound booker, Curly Posen, who was booked for horse stealing. Bulldogged but not bulldozed, he was a sneering prisoner whose defiance of the court brought cries of "Hang him!" from the audience. At one point Curly stripped down to his BVD's, thus unpacking enough meat to make Canada Packers envious.

Although Judge Lawson ordered him to hang, it was decided that the gallows wasn't strong enough to hold him — thus undoing the good work of Prosecutor Dave Ongley. This caused reconsideration along the same lines of thought and it was concluded that Curly mightn't have swiped the steed because it couldn't hold him either. Curly was permitted to go his obnoxious way and victory rested with the defence counsel, Len Bishop.

In charge of the necktie department was Bill Reeves, who occasionally snoozed against a stanchion of the gibbet, no doubt dreaming of the fun to follow. Ugly reality replaced his dreams when he awoke from his last snooze to discover that he wasn't to do his rope trick on the swing shift after all.

The work of Sheriff Mavity and his men in rounding up the horse hustlers and cow rustlers was wasted. The varmints, happy because no noose is good noose, went thisaway instead of the traditional thataway. Next episode: "Buck Mavity Writhes Again."

* * *

Ear, Eye and Throat

At the Pioneer party Clare Appel looked at Earl Lawson, tricked out in cowboy togs, and said: "Some career—politics, law, motion pictures and now cowpunching." To which Earl answered: "There isn't a bit of difference in any of them." What's he mean—that you use a gun in each, or throw the bull? . . . Len Bishop said, in the course of his remarks: "Time is the element." So I asked Variety's Bob McStay: "He means 'Time is the essence,' doesn't he?" Answered McStay: "Oh, no, an element never forgets" . . . Jack Arthur sat in on a new type of production and found it interesting. He was a juror for a week. So what happens? He gets sprung in time to take in the Pioneer doings—and has to watch another trial.

Nat Bresver, manager of the Belsize, has acquired the Oak, Brandon, Manitoba, from Odeon. He managed it before returning to Toronto a couple of years ago . . . Walter and Jean Kennedy just celebrated their 36th anniversary . . . The Royal, Hamilton, just closed for good after 37 years . . . Paul Scherman, Toronto Symphorchestra conductor, was married in New York to Donna Creed, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Creed, who have many friends in the film colony. Morton Gould was the best man. Zara Nelsova, the cellist, introduced the boy and the girl and

The Way We Are

AN USHER informed Al Perly, manager of the Midtown Theatre, that the syrup had been leaking out of the drink machine. "I wouldn't care so much if the screen went dark or the sound went off," shrieked Al, "but this has to happen to me!"

AT THE TORONTO party for Mary Pickford Jack Chisholm, Ontario manager for Associated Screen News and a veteran cameraman who worked in Hollywood after the first World War, recalled that she had been Honorary Commandant of the Los Angeles branch of the Canadian Legion, of which he had been a member.

Mary was about to attend a meeting and it was decided to present her with three dozen roses. This was done but no bill was forthcoming from a florist or the comrade who had been assigned to get them.

It was learned later that he was Mary's gardener at Pickfair and had lifted the roses from her conservatory. They had presented Mary with her own flowers.

IN THE TRIBELL show Sammy Sales and Johnny Shapiro, the comics, played a couple of treasure hunters who used a mine detector to locate a buried chest. They open it, pull out stacks of bills and bags of money. Then they see something else, throw away the cash and, amid great joy, pull out a cabbage.

Before the show they asked Joe Poster, the producer, to get them a treasure chest for the bit. "I can get a treasure chest easily enough," said Joe, "but where am I going to get a cabbage?"

HAL FISHER, the Barclay favorite, always drapes the customers over the table with laughter. But the gag of his I like best is about the two horse-bettors who couldn't agree on which horse to bet in a six-nag race. They decided to ask an old-timer, who studied the Racing Form for a while, then gave his opinion. "There ain't a horse in this race," he said, "that can win it."

As A CERTAIN well-hated character was walking by an observer pointed to him. "That guy is proof that you can be a louse all your life," he said, "and still die rich."

"So let him be a louse," another said impatiently. "So let him die rich—but let it be soon!"

DURING the not-too-recent world conflict a Victory Bond salesman deep in Quebec stopped at a farmhouse and made a fast and easy sale. The habitant then took him into the living room and pointed proudly to the wall. "See," he said, "I still have one from the last war." There, framed, was a \$200 1915 Victory Bond, coupons and all.

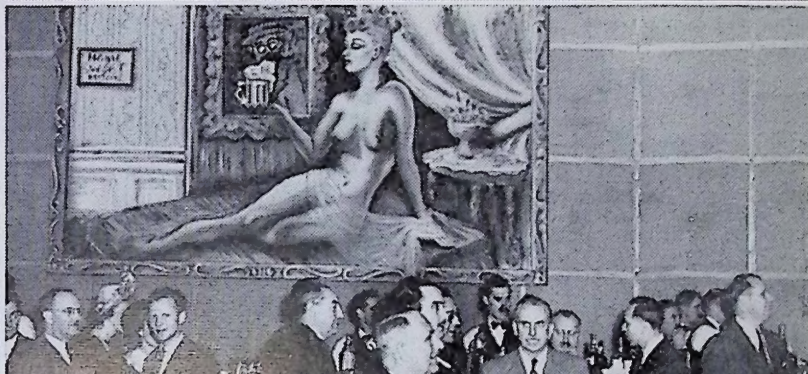
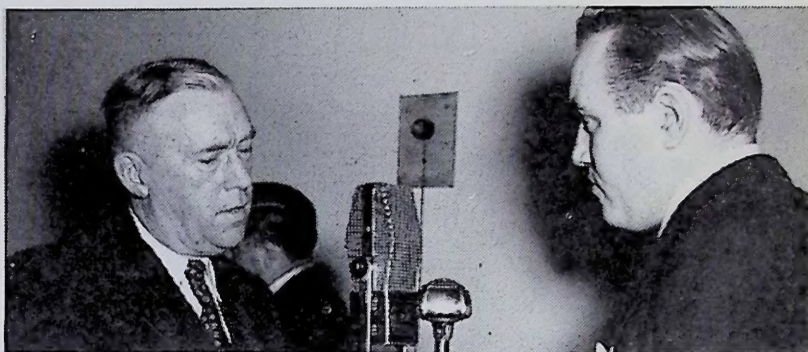
"Why didn't you cash it?" asked the salesman.

"Cash it?" said the habitant. "You can cash it? I thought it was a receipt for my donation."

that was it . . . For the record: My remarks about a sports columnist who is loose with racial opprobriums didn't refer to Jim Coleman, a fine writer with a healthy dislike of that sort of thing.

Ross McLean addressed the recent luncheon meeting of the eastern branch of the MPTAO in Ottawa. Henry Marshall, prexy, intro'd the NFB chief . . . It was a quiet wedding for Alfreda, daughter of the Ben Geldsalers, and Phil Henry of Toronto . . . USA Indies are critical of the Motion Picture Foundation . . . Foto-Nite is asking an injunction to prevent operation of the Aron, Campbellford, on the grounds that it violates the agreement by which it acquired its lease on the Hollywood, in the same town . . . Roses of Yesterday: keg beer for the home . . . Warners Canadian newsreel scooped all the rest with its pictures of Barbara Ann Scott winning the championship at Prague and managers made the most of it by special advertising that brought in extra business.

At Opening of New Audio Pictures' Studio



Want Sunday Shows In Yellowknife, NWT

At a meeting of the Northwest Territories council recently, the local branch of the Canadian Legion asked that Sunday shows be permitted in Yellowknife for the recreation of miners.

Granting of the Legion's petition would require an amendment to the Lord's Day Act, but it would apply only to the specified locality, in the opinion of authoritative sources. Sunday shows are legal in Quebec.

Young, Pathe Head Eyes RKO And UA

R. Young, whose Pathe Industry wholly owns Eagle-Lion Films, Inc., in a recent statement said that "A group of private investors associated with me has been looking at both RKO and United Artists with a view toward a possible investment, but to date nothing has come of it. Whether agreement can be reached on price and other factors is a question for the future to decide."

Thousands joined in celebrating the opening of Canada's newest and most complete motion picture studio in New Toronto as guests of Audio Pictures.

The top photo on the left shows the Honorable D. Roland Michener, Provincial Secretary, who represented Ontario Premier George Drew; Arthur Gottlieb, president of Audio Pictures; Mayor Robert Saunders of Toronto; and Hans Tiesler, vice-president, who is in charge of production. Mr. Michener officially opened the studio.

In the top right photo Edward S. Currie, general manager of the Canadian Kodak Company, is shown being interviewed over CJBC by Lorne Greene.

In the left photo in the centre panel a section of the crowd on the sound stage is shown and in the right the old-time oasis for the thirsty.

The bottom left photo shows Tiesler; Al Young, Du-Art Laboratories, NY; Gottlieb; Arthur Loucks, Loucks and Norling Studios, NY; John Hans, Depicto Pictures, NY; and Al Raffé, Craftsmen, Limited, NY.

Entertainment and atmosphere was in the mood of the 90s, as indicated by the bartenders and Violet Murray.

Brampton Theatres To Be Re-Named

Odeon Theatres' Capitol in Brampton, Ontario, undergoing extensive alterations, will be re-named the Odeon when it is again opened for business shortly.

The new theatre being built by Odeon, which is expected to open sometime in March, will be named the Roxy on completion.

Committee Endorses No Smoking Bylaw

Civic legislation committee of Toronto City Council endorsed a request for permissive legislation to provide a bylaw governing smoking in theatres in the city. Bylaw sought would give Toronto power to allow smoking where facilities were satisfactory and prohibit where otherwise.

Theatre Employees Help Nab Gunmen

Cleverness and quick thinking by theatre employees aided Toronto police last week in the apprehension of two men suspected of armed robbery in two different sections of the city.

In the first instance a lone holdup man shoved a gun at the cashier of the Bedford Theatre and made her hand over the ticket money. The manager, Neil Talling, saw the man running from the booth and, on being informed that the same man had apparently held up a cafe previously, immediately notified all theatres in the neighborhood, with the result that the man was caught by the police in the Glendale Theatre.

An usher at the College theatre, Lewis Urry, while taking care of the boxoffice queue happened to overhear a constable calling in the description of a man wanted for the armed hold-up of a nearby drug store. When he recognized the suspect in the theatre lineup, Urry informed the officer and the man was arrested.

Rogell Will Shoot In Alberta

(Continued from Page 1)

earlier for talks with Canadian businessmen interested in the establishment of studios and a production company.

His company was also interested in the former RCAF camp at Shepard, Alberta, about five miles east of Calgary, as the possible location for a studio, he said, although other cities were being considered.

The first of the two films slated for production under Rogell's direction is "Shadow of Time," which will be started March 1st, and the other, based on Longfellow's "Hiawatha," will be started in the autumn.

Another film under consideration is one based on Confederation, with elements of the CPR and Riel Rebellion stories.

"Northwest Stampede," which Rogell directed in the Calgary district last summer, will be world-premiered in Calgary about May 1st.

It is expected that Canadian production by American companies will be stimulated by the desire of Ottawa to keep some of the money sent from here to the USA as film rentals in this country.

Despatches from Ottawa, printed in dozens of Canadian papers, reported that this had been agreed to at a meeting of John J. Fitzgibbons, president of Famous Players Canadian Corporation, who is said to have represented the film companies, and the Honorable C. D. Howe, Minister of Trade and Commerce.

There is, however, an air of mystery about the whole thing. Mr. Fitzgibbons has issued no public statement nor has he been quoted directly on the subject, while even heads of Canadian film companies are just as uncommunicative. Nothing has come out of the Johnston Office, either.

Fox Film Retitled

"Fury at Furnace Creek" is the new title of 20th Century-Fox' "Ballad of Furnace Creek."

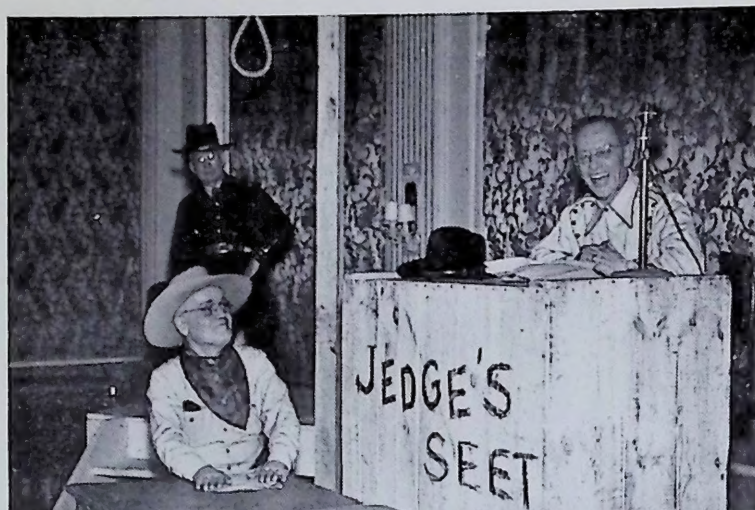
"Fury at Furnace Creek" stars Victor Mature, with Coleen Gray, Glenn Langan and Reginald Gardiner featured. The picture was directed by Bruce Humphreys.

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Canadian Picture Pioneers



Pioneer justice waiting for horse thieves who, by non-coincidence, were the applicants for membership. Judge Lawson on the bench, Deputy Ben Cronk seated and Bill Reeves, a member of the posse, waiting to use the noose above him on the varmints.

The bottom photo shows the new officers and directors. Front row, left to right, are Sam Sternberg, Clare Appel, Oscar Hanson, the Honorable J. Earl Lawson, Leonard Bishop and Bill Reeves. Second row — Willard O'Neil, Joe Garbarino, Charles Mavety, Ben Cronk, Morris Doyle and David Ongley.

Open-Air Theatre Donated To City

An anonymous woman will build an open-air theatre as a gift to the city of Victoria, BC, providing the site of the structure will be on Beacon Hill. Neighbors of the park have voiced objection and City Council has been asked to decide as plans for the place are in the hands of architects. Theatre will likely be used for stage shows only.

Preparing Plans For New Island Theatre

Plans are being prepared for the first theatre on Toronto Island. To be situated on Manitou Road, it will cost approximately \$100,000 and will have some 650 seats. Builder is the Island Theatre Company. Strenuous protests were voiced by dwellers of the Island when the plan was first made public, but the permit was finally granted by City Council.

Geo. McComber Passes At 47

(Continued from Page 1)

of Port Arthur, having served six terms as an alderman.

Born in Port Arthur, he was the son of the late Judge and Mrs. H. A. McComber. Shortly after he entered theatre business in early youth, he became associated with Famous Players in its Lakehead theatres. He was appointed assistant manager of the Capitol, Calgary, under John Hazza, being later moved to Montreal, where he was assistant to James Adams at Loew's for five years before resigning to return to Port Arthur as secretary-treasurer of the Thunder Bay Lumber Company.

In the late '20s he returned to theatre business, leasing the Lyceum in partnership with A. Fred Cooper, later becoming sole owner. McComber eventually sold an interest to Famous Players.

In the course of public life he was chairman of the Legislative and Public Welfare committees of the council, and a director of the Canadian Lakehead Exhibition. He took an active interest in the promotion of the CNR ore dock in Port Arthur, over which travels the iron ore from Steep Rock.

He is survived by his wife, Julia; one son and two daughters; and five brothers and one sister, all of Port Arthur.

'White Devils' Set For Ansko Color

Producers Irving Allen and James S. Burkett have set plans to film "White Devils," a full-length feature of Austria's ski-patrollers, in Ansko color for Allied Artists release. Max Trel has been assigned to do the original screenplay and background footage has been shot in the Austrian Alps.

Winnipeg Exchange Territory Statistical Summary

OCTOBER, 1947

	No.	Seating Capacity		No.	Seating Capacity
Theatres in operation	350	125,809	Circuit-operated theatres*	93	56,763
Closed Theatres	4	820	Non-circuit theatres	257	69,046
Totals	354	126,629	Totals	350	125,809

Seating capacity of theatres now in operation, according to population groupings:

Population	Towns with Theatres	Cumulative Total	No. Theatres Operating	Cumulative Total	No. of Seats	Cumulative Total	Average Seats Per Theatre
500,000-250,001	1(Winnipeg)	—	44	—	32,837	—	746
250,000-100,001	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
100,000-50,001	1(Regina)	2	6	50	5,107	37,944	851
50,000-25,001	2	4	11	61	9,147	47,091	832
25,000-10,001	4	8	10	71	6,994	54,085	699
10,000-5,001	7	15	11	82	5,834	59,919	533
5,000-2,501	5	20	7	89	3,209	63,128	458
2,500 and under	253	273	261	350	62,681	125,809	248

*A circuit is defined as "four or more" theatres operated by the same management.

Mary Sceptical Re Dom'n Production

Mary Pickford who owns half of United Artists and has returned to the film-making field, provided some interesting news of her plans and opinions about production in Canada during her visit. Meanwhile, Samuel Goldwyn entered suit against her and Lady Sylvia Ashley, widow of Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. Goldwyn wants the old United Artists studio, in which he is a partner, divided or sold.

Asked about the chances for production of films in Canada, she was not optimistic.

"I suppose I should do the diplomatic thing and say yes, Canada should have movie studios," said Miss Pickford. "But my Canadian conscience will not let me do that.

"No, I think you can produce a good many pictures, on location, in Canada, and you can use a great many Canadian actors, but in my opinion, you would have to have the studios in Hollywood. After all, there has grown up a second generation in Hollywood, who seem to have the movies in their system and who know how things there should be done.

"It is not only the actors, but all the other people, and it does not seem feasible that we could produce pictures on a large scale in Canada, much though I should like to see it done."

Asked about making "educational pictures," Miss Pickford came right to the point.

"Stop at any magazine stand," she said. "See what they read. A producer when he is spending as much as four million dollars, cannot risk something that is educational.

"I do not think it is our duty to attempt to educate movie goers; it would take the money of the Rockefellers to be able to afford that. True, pictures could be more adult, but you cannot educate people if they don't want it."

She noted the failure of wonderful English pictures like "Brief Encounter" and "Colonel Blimp," felt sure that you could not give people pictures they did not want to see.

Outlining her future plans, she said she was going to do a picture called "Venus," a funny picture with the Marx Brothers, and one tentatively labelled "See What I Mean." Also the life of Hoagy Carmichael, to be called "Star Dust Trail."

The Exile

with Douglas Fairbanks Jr., Maria Montez, Paule Croset

Empire-Universal 95 Mins.
HISTORICAL YARN HAS MANY POTENT POSSIBILITIES: PRODUCED WITH CARE, KNOW-HOW.

Here we have detailed in the sepia process the life and times of Charles II, King of England, in exile from the Cromwell government in Holland. The period embraced is considerably before he met up with "Amber." Instead, in this version of Cosmo Hamilton's story, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., who plays the rakish monarch, meets up with Paule Croset.

The Fairbanks Co., Inc. produced this story and it has many potent values which the exhibitor will recognize. If he is guided by past performances of historical, costumed offerings, he will know what he is about when he books this one. Production details are put forth with care. Fairbanks is just the player for the part.

It starts in Holland where Fairbanks is living with his retainers, hiding out from Cromwell's henchmen who would do him in on sight. They live poorly. Charles II is biding his time until England gets fed up with Cromwell's rule. With the problem of eluding death becoming pressing, Fairbanks skips out and goes into hiding at Miss Croset's inn and farm, hiring himself out as a hand.

An actor, posing as Charles II reaches the place. Fairbanks kids him along, figuring on a future use for the deception. Next comes Maria Montez, an old flame. She stays the night, enables Fairbanks to settle Miss Croset's indebtedness. They also have a very "continental" conversation while she is bathing in an interesting contraption.

Later a Cromwell agent comes with a gang of assistants who chase Fairbanks all over the place and corner him in a windmill. This gives Fairbanks an opportunity for swordplay, fisticuffs, acrobatics and the colorful like. In time Fairbanks' boys come up with news he can return to England. He makes his farewell with Miss Croset and takes off.

CAST: Maria Montez, Paule Croset, Henry Daniell, Nigel Bruce, Robert Coote, Otto Waldis, Eldon Gorst, Colin Keith-Johnson.

CREDITS: Written and produced by Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.; Director, Max Opuls; Photography, Frank Planer.

DIRECTION, Capable. PHOTOGRAPHY, Fine.

Intrigue

with George Raft, June Havoc, Helena Carter

UA 90 Mins.
ROUTINE RAFT NUMBER: RETARDED BY LONG-SPACING OF ACTION SEQUENCES.

Weakness in this one lies in concentrating a great deal of space, time and footage to dull dialogue moments when the accent should have been on action of a violent nature and such trivia as builds for the promise in the film's title. The over all story concerns the breakup of a black market in Shanghai. The other story is the vindication of George Raft, one-time Army pilot, of a court martial conviction that caused his dismissal from the service when contraband goods was found in his plane. Three fellow officers, also convicted, are dead. He is rather thoroughly shunned by Americans in the Chinese City until Helena Carter and Tom Tully come along.

In the beginning the plot is airborne. This is exciting. At the end Raft breaks up the black market gang in a brawl. That too, is action. In between he goes from Miss Carter to Miss Havoc and back. The former is a lovely innocent girl, sister of a crew-member, also a social worker. Miss Havoc is a beautiful, sinuous, devastatingly dressed "Madame Baranoff," sort of Dragon Lady operator. In black market circles she's ebon.

Tully figures as a newspaperman come to China to expose the illegal activity and of course he eventually finds out about Raft's participation. But Raft pulls a switch when he sees orphaned children faced with hunger. Tully is murdered. His dander up, Raft visits Miss Havoc, makes her write a confession, throws open a warehouse full of food to the starving citizenry and after beating up Marvin Miller, walks off with Miss Carter.

Yarn as displayed here is pretty feeble stuff most of the way. It has visual appeal—Miss Havoc. A good deal of unconvincing hokum lards the proceedings.

CAST: George Raft, June Havoc, Helena Carter, Tom Tully, Marvin Miller, Dan Seymour, Phillip Ahn.

CREDITS: A Star Films Production; Producer, Sam Bischoff; Director, Edwin L. Martin, Screenplay, Barry Trivers, George Slavin; Original story, George Slavin; Photography, Lucien Andriot.

DIRECTION, Average. PHOTOGRAPHY, Very Good.

Miami Preps For Variety Meeting

"Real suthin' hospitality," with something doing every minute and a warm hand of welcome extended to every delegate, barker and his family — that's what's promised by Edward C. May, entertainment chairman for Variety Clubs International's 12th Annual Convention in Miami Beach, Florida, from April 12th to 19th.

"Convention entertainment will really start at the railroad stations and airline terminals," May said, "with music, pretty girls and anything else that the host tent, No. 33, can think of to make the visiting barkers know that we're glad to have them."

"After that," he added, "we will offer a lineup of amusements embracing everything the winter amusement capitol of the world has to offer — horse racing, dog racing, jai alai, dancing under the stars, bathing in the gloriously warm tropical waters, sight-seeing trips by land and sea, fashion shows, cocktail parties, national radio broadcasts and all climaxed by an out of this world South Seas Party involving a barbecue, circus, dancing and what not — all staged in a setting prettier than any movie set."

May's schedule calls for a Get-Acquainted Party for Barkers and Wives on the evening of April 12th, at the Roney Plaza Hotel, Miami Beach, the headquarters for the convention. The party will be held in the Surf Room of the hotel, which has been designated Variety Annex for the period of the convention.

Big feature for April 13th will be a Jai Alai night at Biscayne Fronton, arranged through the courtesy of barker Dick Berenson of the Miami Tent and the Florida Racing Commission, which lengthened the season to accommodate the convention. The colorful Latin sport, which is played in all America only in Miami, is faster than tennis, more dangerous than ice hockey.

Wednesday afternoon and evening will find barkers and their wives enjoying the fabulous South Seas Party on Key Biscayne, the setting which MGM used for "They Were Expendable" and "On An Island With You." The party is planned as the four-star entertainment feature of the convention.

Odeon's Mercier Opens In M't'l

Second of Odeon's newly-completed houses catering specially to the tastes of the French-Canadian theatregoer is now in operation with the opening of the 909-seat Mercier in Montreal's east end.

Operated by General Theatres, Quebec, of which Hon. Philippe Brais is president, the Mercier was designed by Henry E. Green-spoon and built by the firm of H. Davidson.

The house policy, like the others in the "Cinema-Canadienne" group, will emphasize French-language product of three types — French originals from Paris, French versions of J. Arthur Rank English releases completed in Paris, and dubbed versions of Hollywood films. House Manager, Alf Goulet, a radio and stage producer, will also be responsible for a stage presentation, "Parade des Vedettes" which will be included one night weekly in the regular bill. A French variety show, the stage presentation also plays a circuit of Odeon-GTQ houses in the Montreal area.

The design of the Mercier is particularly interesting to the trade. It makes very skilful use of a small corner site at the corner of St. Catherine east and La Salle boulevard. The typical Odeon "picture window" is on the side street and forms the rear wall of the foyer. Passers-by thus look along the length of the foyer to the glass doors leading into the lobby and then the lobby itself. Beside the lobby entrance, there is a courtyard with one theatre wall almost entirely utilized for a modernistic sign of marble framed in neon over a storey in height. The usual marquee is eliminated and a running sign, inset in the theatre structure, traverses the entire front and LaSalle side.

In the foyer, extensive use has been made of an effective new type of decorative plywood. Another unusual touch is the introduction of interior landscaping. The foyer contains two miniature rock gardens with dwarf Laurentian evergreens. Furnishings, including the candy bar, are modernistic.

The auditorium color scheme is carried out in sea-green and salmon, both balcony and orchestra floor. The acoustic treatment is carried out by curved wall surfaces, planes and fluted surfaces in walls and ceilings. The wide aisles and extra leg-room noticeable in other new Odeon houses are also introduced

ECHOES and REFLECTIONS

Movies as Education

(In Ottawa Mary Pickford said that it was the duty of producers to educate the public and this won support from one paper and opposition from the other.)

A NICE SENSE OF PROPORTION

(From the Ottawa Journal)

Miss Mary Pickford said in Ottawa that she didn't think it was the place of the movies to educate the public. That, she remarked, would be "an impossible and expensive proposition only Rockefeller could afford."

That is an obvious truth—obvious at least to all save those few who think of the movies as possessed of a mission to uplift and elevate mankind.

The purpose of the theatre is to amuse and entertain and that gives it abundant scope, whether through spoken plays or the films. If it becomes an agency of education it is by way of being also an agency of propaganda, and that is to defeat its real objective.

Miss Pickford, who grew up and made her great reputation with the movies from the old silent days, knows its possibilities—and its limitations. The movies, like radio broadcasting, have a useful and important place in our social system, but it is a mistake to take either too seriously as a cultural instrument.

MISS PICKFORD'S DEFEATISM

(From the Ottawa Citizen)

Film-making might have been one of the finest of the arts; it is now only an industry. It might have done for education what a world-university could do if such a dream of the future became actual. But Miss Mary Pickford destroys such hopes in two sentences. "A producer when he is spending as much as \$4,000,000 cannot risk something that is educational," she says. And she adds: "I do not think it our duty to attempt to educate movie-goers; it would take the money of the Rockefellers to be able to afford that."

So the film industry, dominated by the financial Frankenstein which it itself created, must never dare to attempt to improve the taste which it exists to satisfy. It cannot be creative but can only give the people "what they want." And if people, knowing no better, prefer the worst to the best, then films must be made accordingly.

Truly, a dismal future for the film industry. If architects followed the logic of it there would be no improvements in cities. If musicians accepted it, music would end in compositions for the juke-box. If artists had such views, what would become of our art galleries?

Fortunately, all experience controverts the assumption that people's taste cannot be educated. In 20 years the British Broadcasting Corporation taught the unmusical people of the United Kingdom an appreciation of the art not surpassed anywhere in Europe today.

in the Mercier.

An innovation for the opening ceremonies was the appearance of the GTQ president, Hon. Mr. Brais, on the screen instead of in person. In his film appearance, he spoke both in French and English and the use of the screen for the formal opening ceremonies made a very decided hit with the capacity audience. Another feature of the opening program was a film re-

cord of the Montreal and Quebec visits made last summer by the French-speaking J. Arthur Rank star, Michael Redgrave.

Clare J. Appel, Odeon's eastern divisional manager, with Gordon Dann, GTQ supervisor in Montreal, received the opening night guests. Alan Robinette of Toronto represented Hon. J. Earl Lawson and the board of Odeon; Jean De Grandpre, the board of General Theatres, Quebec.

Harry Thomas In Indie Product'n

Harry H. Thomas, formerly president of PRC Pictures, Incorporated, has returned to the production field with the formation of an Independent new company, Equity Pictures, Incorporated, which he will head as president. Thomas expects his new organization to turn out 22 features in its first year of operation, all of which will be released through Eagle-Lion (Hollywood) Films.

Thomas joined PRC in April, 1945, as vice-president in charge of distribution and sales, later that year becoming president. He resigned in August, 1947, when all PRC exchanges were absorbed by Eagle-Lion (Hollywood) Films and PRC studios became strictly a production unit under Pathe Industries, parent company of Eagle-Lion. For the five years previous to joining PRC he had been eastern sales manager for Monogram Pictures. A real pioneer of the film industry, Thomas entered show business in 1907 when he opened the Bushwick Palace Theatre in Brooklyn and subsequently he was associated with numerous producing and distributing companies several of which he formed.

Other officers of Equity are Howard Welsch, formerly an executive producer at Universal Studios, vice-president; Jack Schwarz, independent producer; and Sid Justman. Both Schwarz and Justman have a substantial financial interest in the Motion Picture Centre Studio where Equity will headquarter and produce. Jerry Thomas will join the company later in a production capacity.

Of the 22 films scheduled for the initial year, which includes six in color, two have already been completed. Both were produced by Schwarz, the first, in color, being "The Enchanted Valley," starring Alan Curtis, Anne Gwynne and Donn Gift, and the second being "Heading for Heaven," starring Stuart Erwin and Glenda Farrell. Two other films are nearing the shooting stage, one of which, "Jungle Girl," will be in color. Action and exploitation stories will be stressed by the company and a number of stories of this type have been purchased and are in preparation.

Shooting Under Way

Shooting has started on Eagle-Lion (Hollywood) Films' Turhan Bey starrer, "The Spiritualist," from the original by Crane Wilbur.



'Mitty' Kaye Laugh Hit

PRODUCED in
Technicolor and
starring Danny Kaye,
Virginia Mayo and
Boris Karloff, Sam
Goldwyn's RKO pro-
duction, "The Secret
Life of Walter Mit-
ty," is considered to
be the best yet from
the Kaye - Goldwyn
combination.

An exceptionally
strong cast helps
Kaye to portray a
browbeaten proof-
reader.



THE TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE

For Exhibitors a treasure beyond measure! A new high in high adventure and a tremendous new brand of excitement for

HUMPHREY BOGART

WITH

WALTER HUSTON

TIM HOLT • BRUCE BENNETT

Another
terrific
Warner Bros.
picture!



DIRECTED BY

JOHN HUSTON • HENRY BLANK

PRODUCED BY